

U. S. S E N A T E



# Republican Policy Committee

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## Bill Clinton Wrestles With the Truth — And Wins Every Time



**"He's the genius creator of the 'Polymorphous Lie,' the secret to which is not getting stuck with one of those historic Big Lies but constantly moving on, shifting the focus. An ancient Greek philosopher said you never bathe in the same river twice, and with Mr. Clinton you never bathe in the same lie twice, as the lie is ever-changing, constantly renewing itself. By the time you're set to run him down on one untruth, he's flowed on and you have a dozen more on your hands. It's positively hypnotic."**

— Richard Grenier, op-ed, *Washington Times*, 5/17/93

It has long been clear to millions of Clinton-watchers that the current occupant of the White House, if not openly contemptuous of the distinction between truth and falsehood, is at least willing to represent facts as they suit his needs of the moment.

This tendency is not confined to the obvious ethical applications (see RPC's "Clinton Administration Sets New World Record in Ethical Violations," 7/31/96) but has been the unmistakable hallmark of Bill Clinton's approach to crucial substantive policy issues such as taxes, welfare reform, and drugs. What he says today is not only inoperative tomorrow — it's as if he had never even said it, his previous utterances and actions cast into George Orwell's "Memory Hole." A few examples:

### Taxes

► **"I've offered a comprehensive plan . . . It starts with a tax cut for the middle class" [1/92]. "I will not raise taxes on the middle class" to pay for new programs [10/19/92].**

► But in 1993, without a single vote from the other party, President Clinton enacted the **biggest tax hike** in American history — **\$276 billion** in new taxes over five years — **aimed right at the middle class**: taxes on gas, business, payroll, and Social Security.

► Looking back, the president said: *“People . . . think I raised your taxes too much. It might surprise you to know that I think I raised them too much, too”* [10/17/95].

► But two days later, the 1993 tax increase was *“the right thing to do”* [10/19/95].

## Welfare Reform

► During campaign 1992, Candidate Clinton promised to *“end welfare as we know it”* [8/12/92]. But in his **first two years in office**, with both houses of Congress controlled by his party, he proposed **no serious reform efforts** — just more money for the same failed programs.

► But after the 1994 election, the new Majority in Congress **twice** sent him legislation to overhaul the welfare system and *end welfare as we know it*. And **twice he vetoed it**.

► While comprehensive reform languished, President Clinton dallied with **piecemeal reform** in the form of **waivers** for states to institute their own plans. In particular, he **pledged to grant Wisconsin’s waiver request** (*“a solid, bold welfare reform plan”*) [5/18/96] — but **never did**. He praised a **third welfare reform bill** moving through Congress [7/15&16/96] — but hinted to Minority Leader Daschle that he **might veto it**, too [7/18/96].

► Finally, after days of conflicting signals (and convinced, according to members of his party, by the urgings of his **pollsters**), President Clinton **said he will sign** the third bill. Bob Dole: **“There’s not a dime’s worth of difference”** between it and the two he vetoed [8/1/96].

## Drugs

► “[President Bush] *hasn’t fought a real war on crimes and drugs. I will*” [7/16/92].

► After taking office, President Clinton **slashed the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) staff** by more than 80 percent and funding by 90 percent [Budget, FY 1994]. In his FY 1995 budget proposal, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the FBI, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the U.S. Customs Service, and the U.S. Coast Guard were targeted to lose a total of **621 drug enforcement agents**. Defense Department **drug interdiction funding** fell by **half** between FY 1992 and FY 1995.

► But in 1996, President Clinton blithely has **returned to his 1992 script**. A White House supplemental request included \$3.4 million to restore 150 personnel slots to the ONDCP. Commented the *Washington Post*: **“Moving full circle in this election year, President Clinton plans an ambitious upgrading of the White House drug control office three years after virtually wiping out that office”** [3/6/96].